BURNLEY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER MAY 2026

CONCLUSION OF LECTURE PROGRAMME 2025/26

January 14th

Walter Bennett Memorial Lecture

The Walter Bennett Memorial Lecture was attended by the Mayor of Burnley in his capacity as President of the Society, together with the Mayoress of Burnley. The Mayor, Councillor Paul Reynolds, chaired the meeting, delivering a speech before handing over to the speaker. The Mayoress also addressed the audience. The guest speaker for the lecture was Mike Smith of Burnley FilmMakers, whose subject was **"Sam Hanna, the Prolific Burnley Amateur Film Maker"**. Mike showed a selection of Sam's films, many of them in colour, some of them accompanied by Sam's original commentary, and others where commentary had been added.

February 11th.

"A More THEN than NOW illustrated talk about Burnley"

Edward Walton of Burnley Civic Trust and the Society gave an illustrated talk on the history of the creation of the M65 and the former route of Padiham Road from the Mitre Junction through to the Tim Bobbin at Ightenhill. The route required the acquisition of houses, shops, pubs and commercial buildings. The creation of the huge trough through which runs the motorway and its slip roads, Gannow Lane, Cog Lane and Westway link was a complicated route. Changes to the Leeds Liverpool Canal, pedestrian and road links were shown on photos of the 1975 to 1981 era. He was thankful that Brian Hall-formerly of the Society, Burnley Civic Trust Image Collection and others had photographed previous scenes of the area.

March 11th

"Pockets of Pacifism in East Lancashire. Local Peace Campaigners during the Two World Wars"

The speaker, Steven Illingworth, described his presentation as a historical study not a moral lecture. When conscription was introduced in 1916 during the First World War for men who had not enlisted so far voluntarily 16,000 of these were conscience objectors for a variety of reasons. Some accepted non-combatant alternatives offered and of those who didn't 5,000 were sent to prison. Pacifists were in the minority with the majority of people in support of war.

April 8th

"Trials of the Lancashire Witches"

Dr. Graham Kemp had been booked to give this lecture, however when he did not arrive the Society's Chairman, Denise North, stood in at very short notice and produced her **Plan B** – a PowerPoint presentation entitled **"Stitches in Time."** Denise demonstrated how needle and thread had been used throughout history to record events. The earliest example was the *Bayeux Tapestry* and the most recent one *The Great Tapestry of Scotland.* As an embroiderer, as well as an historian, Denise had recorded many aspects of her own and her family's history and examples were shown. One of her own embroideries was of Pendle Hill, displaying the year of the trials and execution of the Pendle Witches – at least the original theme did get a mention!

LECTURE PROGRAMME 2026/27

2026

September 9th.

"Mrs. John Brown" by Denise North

October 14th.

"Tsingtao to Skipton: escape story of two German Naval Officers who ended up in Skipton Prisoner of War Camp" by Anne Buckley

November 11th.

"The Leeds and Liverpool Canal" by Colin Thunhurst

December 9th.

Annual General Meeting

2027

January 13th.

"Seven Members of the Peel Family" by Lavinia Tod

February 10th.

"Margaret Aldersley and Selina Cooper - The Struggles and Dilemmas of Burnley and Nelson Suffragists" by Steven Illingworth

March 19th.

"Rifle Inspection at Rouge Croix" by Andrew Gill

April 14th.

"My walk around the boundary of Historic Lancashire" by Philip Walsh

GEOFF LANCASTER

Geoff Lancaster has retired from the committee after 10 years. Thank you Geoff for all your hard work during this time.

ADELPHI HOTEL

The remains of the Adelphi Hotel have now been removed and the site cleared for development. The derelict building had been an eyesore for over 25 years and it will be interesting to see what develops, but in the meantime, it would seem ideal for a welcoming wild flower garden for those arriving by train – just a thought!

KELP

The heritage lottery funded project Keeping East Lancashire in the Picture has now concluded and the images made available on line by volunteers are available in the Lancashire Archives Red Rose Collection.

BURNLEY FOOTBALL CLUB

Burnley Football Club was relegated with four games yet to play on Wednesday 22nd April after putting in a spirited performance before losing 0 – 1 to Manchester City. The euphoria which followed at the end of last season when they gained promotion to the Premier League now seems a long, long time ago.

BURNLEY WOMEN FC

Burnley women fared much better! On Sunday 26th April a 3 - 0 win against fourth place Stoke City saw the team promoted as Champions of the Women's National League Northern Premier Division after an unbeaten season, scoring 63 goals in 22 games and only conceding 5 goals! It was a very good team performance and a very good atmosphere within the ground. Burnley Football Club made it quite a family occasion. The team will play in Women's Super League 2 next season.

CLARETS COLLECTED - FOOTBALL CLUB ARCHIVE

This is an ongoing project, the aim being to preserve the history of Burnley Football Club and its importance to the town. Based in the Central Library, it is essentially a fan led project but through *Friends of Lancashire Archives* has secured funding for an Engagement Officer to organise/catalogue memorabilia which has been and continues to be generously donated.

Plans are in hand to launch an exhibition in May: *"One of Our Own: Burnley Made and Played"* which will focus on players from the locality who featured from the early days to the current era. Further details can be obtained from the Internet.

BURNLEY RUGBY UNION FOOTBALL CLUB

CONGRATULATIONS! The club celebrates its Centenary this year having been founded in 1926 as Calder Vale Rugby Union Club. A name change was made in 2002 in order to strengthen its identity with the town. The club currently fields three senior sides, as well as a women's team and encourages youngsters to learn the sport. The club is progressing very well and has a very informative Facebook site which is certainly worth a visit.

MACKENZIE CHESS TABLE & SHIELD

We are still trying to find a permanent home for these two articles (see Retrospect volume 41 2025) We have had no response from the Towneley Hall Museum and are consequently investigating other possibilities.

WEAVERS' TRIANGLE VISITOR CENTRE

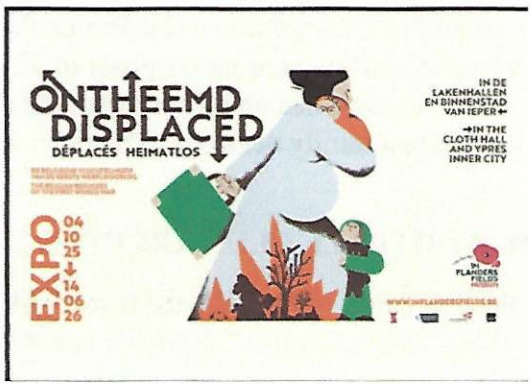
Refurbishment at the Visitor Centre is ongoing. The new external steps and railings up to the Toll Office were completed in the Autumn. It is hoped to replace all windows this year in a style in keeping with a listed building. The redevelopment scheme on Manchester Road is also limiting public access so the centre will not be open regularly this season. The Oak Mount Mill Engine House will be open on Monday 4th May & 25th May, Sunday 30th August, 13th& 20thSeptember. It is hoped to open the Visitor Centre later in the season for the Canal Festival and Heritage Open Days and to re-launch the centre fully for the 2027 season. New volunteers are welcome. Please contact John Livingstone on 01282 422785 or Diane Malone on 0799844414.

TOWNELEY HALL

Towneley Hall has now re-opened after extensive renovation work. An exhibition from 4th. April until 28th. June 2026 entitled "*The Jewel Restored*" tells the story of the restoration.

BURNLEY WW1 BELGIAN REFUGEES

In response to a request from the In FlandersFields Museum, Ypres, for information regarding Belgian refugees to the UK in WW1, I submitted information with regard to Burnley. This has been used in an exhibition at the museum and also in a research project which is being presented at a conference on the theme of displacement.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→IN THE CLOTH HALL AND YPRES INNER CITY
IN FLANDERS FIELDS MUSEUM

HMS ACTIVE

HMS ACTIVE was Burnley's adopted ship. A Type 21 Class frigate, it was launched in 1972 and saw action in the Falklands war in 1982. The ship was decommissioned in 1994 and sold to Pakistan serving until 2021 when it was sunk after being used as a target! An anchor from the ship is sited on Active Way. It is pleasing that a new frigate of the same name was rolled out at Rosyth shipyard in February this year and is currently fitting out after being launched in March.

SUMMER VISIT

A visit to Wood End Farm Mining Museum has been organised to take place on July 6th. 2026 at 2.30 p.m. and will last for one hour. The cost per person is £4 and refreshments are available at an extra cost. Places are limited so anyone wishing to attend should contact Steven Child.

QUERIES

Request for Help 1 –Adam Middleton

"My name is Adam Middleton and I am currently in the early stages of creating a short documentary about the History of Burnley, right back to the first settlers. My goal is to inspire the next generation to take pride in where they are from while teaching them and everyone else some interesting things about their home. I would be narrating this documentary as one of my music personas "*Dungeon Master*" so it would be almost like a "*Crusade for Knowledge*" the documentary would be light hearted and entertaining but I am also wanting it to be historically accurate and for it to include short interviews with some historians that are very knowledgeable in Burnley's history."
Further detail is available on the Internet under *Dungeon Master.*

Request for help 2 –SallyAnn Deauville

SallyAnn Deaville<ar0lyn@icloud.com>

"I am writing to see if you have a specific book or record in your local history collection regarding a Burnley resident named Constance (Connie) Irene Hartley (née Bond).The account is titled "*The Two Lives of Mrs. Hartley.*" It tells the true story of her life in Burnley during the 1960s and her remarkable journey to join her husband in America, which she reportedly achieved by flying without a passport or visa.I believe this may be a privately published memoir, a local history pamphlet, or a detailed feature from a local publication rather than a mainstream commercial book.Could you please check your archives or local authors' index to see if you hold a copy of this title or any related records regarding Mrs. Hartley's story? If it is available, I would be very interested to know if it can be viewed or if there are details on the author/publisher so I can track down a copy."
Thank you for your time and assistance.
Kind regards,
Sally Deaville

PUBLICATIONS

There was an error in Ramon's article"*Worsthorne Hall and the Rochester Dole*" in *Retrospect* volume 41 2025. On page 31 in the second paragraph, instead of "another Halsted of Worsthorne also called Robert and possibly the one at the hall" should read "another

Halsted ofWorsthorne, also called Robert, and possibly the uncle of the one at the hall". The error occurred at the editing stage apologies to Ramon.

The *Index of Contents* of *Retrospect, 1980 – 2025,* which was compiled by Molly Haines, has now been printed and copies will be on sale at the September meeting of the Society

RETROSPECT 2026

Members are invited to submit articles for the 2026 edition of *Retrospect* and these should be submitted by the end of August. Aprotocol specifying typing parameters and style is available from Denise North.

WEBSITE

The last Newsletter, December 2025, appeared on the Website with the colour photographs changed to monochrome for reasons unclear. This matter was brought up at a recent Committee Meeting and hopefully should not happen again! Apologies to those who submitted the photographs.

AND FINALLY:

Enjoy the Spring, Look Forward to Summer and we meet again in Autumn

Denise North

Chairman & Editor of Newsletter